

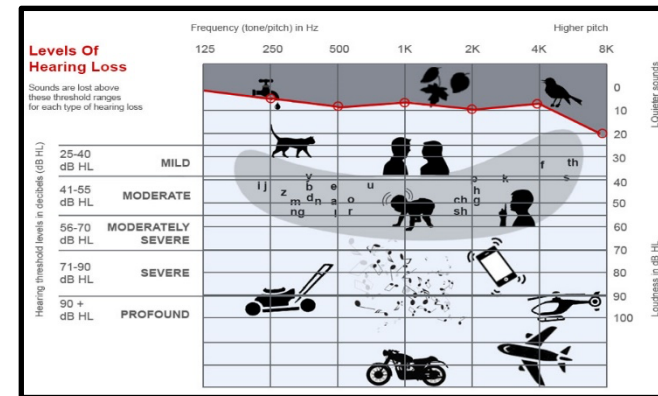
DeafBlind Awareness Week

Important Facts and Tips on Staying Connected

June 21 – 27, 2020

What is DeafBlind?

- “DeafBlind” is used to describe people with various degrees and types of **BOTH** a hearing and vision loss.
- People can become DeafBlind at any age. Causes can include illness, injury and genetics.
- DeafBlind people can and do lead productive lives especially when they have the training and support to maximize their independence.
- DeafBlind people use a variety of communication methods, depending on the age of onset, the degree and type of hearing and vision loss and the communication environment they are in.
- According to the 2019 statistics from the Helen Keller National Center, more than 83,648 people in North Carolina are DeafBlind.



Audiogram

Tips for Avoiding Social Isolation

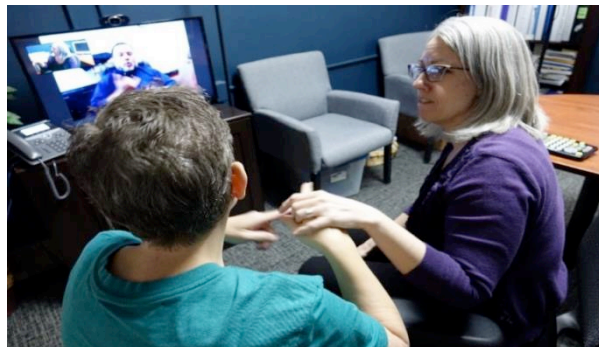
- National DeafBlind Equipment Distribution Program
 - Free technology for distance communication (email, phone, social media)
 - To find out more, call 1(800) 825-4595, TTY: (888) 320-2656, or visit the website: www.iCanConnect.org
- Stay connected with friends, family and community
 - Email, Videophone, Text, & Letters
- Participate in Virtual Support Groups/Trainings
 - Contact NC DSDHH Deaf-Blind Services Specialist for more information.
- Practice Self-Care
 - Exercise
 - Arts & crafts
 - Connect with nature



DeafBlind Friendly Video Communication

Social Distancing can create communication barriers for DeafBlind people, especially those who use tactile or close-vision communication. Here are some DeafBlind friendly tips to improve video communication.

- Tactile sign language interpreters may be necessary to provide on-site interpreting services for video and telephone appointments. Ensure interpreters and consumer are well, have protective gear and wash hands frequently.
- Turn off auto-focus and allow for zooming capacities.
- The background and clothing must be solid and contrast with skin color.
- Adjust lighting so it illuminates from the front, without glare. No lighting from behind.



COVID-19 Survival Tips

Here are some tips to staying healthy and getting essentials:

- Washing hands and avoid touching faces is critical.
- Bring your phone with you wherever you go. You can use it as a communication tool.
- Ask others before interacting if they have been exposed to COVID-19.
- Prepare shopping lists to limit time wandering in stores. Many stores are taking orders over the phone or online.
- Use dry-erase boards to write in large, bold print and show from a distance or through clear glass barriers.
- Get accessible information from online sources like www.ncdhhs.gov/covid19.



DeafBlind Resources

For additional information & services on having both vision and hearing loss, please contact nearby [NC DSDHH regional center](#).

NC DSDHH hearing loss resources related to COVID-19: www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/services-deaf-and-hard-hearing/covid-19-hearing-loss-resources

Disability Rights of North Carolina: www.disabilityrightsncc.org

The American Association of the Deaf-Blind: www.aadb.org

DeafBlind Interpreting: www.dbinterpreting.com

Helen Keller National Center: www.hknc.org